

In order to screen a film to the public you need two licences.

First the venue you plan to use must have a **premises licence** which includes 'film' (your venue may already have this but you need to check; if it hasn't, contact your local District Council to find out how to get one or a Temporary Event Notice).

Secondly, you need a **film licence**, which can be one of three different types, depending on whether you wish to charge an entry fee, become a club or just screen films as part of many other social activities.

Film licences allow you to screen a film to the public and are available through agents or film distributors (see [Factsheet 5: Where to Get Films](#)).

Specific legally enforceable licence conditions govern the screening of films, and the conditions vary according to the circumstances of the screening.

Broadly, one of the following licences can apply, each of which has different conditions.

1. COMMERCIAL LICENCE

The licence element is usually part of the hire fee for films loaned on a commercial basis from a distributor such as Filmbank

www.filmbank.co.uk

There are no restrictions on showing or advertising the film. The promoter completes a Box Office Return for each screening and pays 35% of the box office takings or a guarantee of around £75, whichever is the greater, in addition to the VAT and the transportation cost of the film.

2. NON-COMMERCIAL LICENCE

These are normally used by film societies. There are restrictions on showing and advertising the film. No money must be taken on the door, tickets must be booked in advance and screenings must be advertised only to members, not to the general public. Licence to show the film is charged on a flat fee of £75, in addition to the transportation cost of the film.

3. UMBRELLA LICENCE

The Motion Picture Licensing Company provides an annual umbrella licence which permits the legal screening of unlimited numbers of titles purchased or rented from any legitimate source. The licence does not cover showings where admission is charged or where specific titles are publicly advertised.

The annual licence fee ranges from £50 to £250 depending on the type of facility, the number of screenings and the anticipated audience size. Carriage cost of the film is not included. Many

umbrella licence holders buy and show commercially-available DVDs, as well as hiring films. See www.themplc.co.uk for more details.

If the main purpose of your venue is not to screen films (e.g. if you host other social activities) and you can afford to screen the film for free, you could get an annual Public Video Screening (PVS) licence from Filmbank. See their website for more details:

www.filmbank.co.uk

Once you have the licence you can buy or rent the DVD.

FILM SOCIETIES

Film societies usually consist of members and guests. Some operate on a 'closed' non-theatrical basis and flat-fee film licences. Others are open to the public and use commercial film licences. Societies use Filmbank and other smaller film distributors as their main source of films and film licences. Visit the British Federation of Film Societies (BFFS) website

www.bffs.org.uk

Filmbank's website has a useful explanation of film licences

www.filmbank.co.uk

VENUE REGULATIONS & INSURANCE

Venues for community cinema screenings should:

- Have appropriate licensing in place to show films either through their

Premises Licence or a temporary event notice (details from your local District Council)

- Hold appropriate Public Liability Insurance
- Meet relevant Health & Safety regulations
- Be accessible to a wide audience

Nowadays most village halls and community centres meet the regulations governing disabled access and fire, but you should always check.

You should also check with your district council that the venue has the relevant Premises Licence that covers regulated entertainment, including screening films. It is possible to get a **Temporary Event Notice (TEN)**, rather than a full Premises Licence. However a TENS Licence can only be used for the same premises on a maximum of 12 occasions.

Your venue should have its own **Public Liability Insurance** and meet relevant Health and Safety requirements. The Fire Prevention Officer from your local fire station, or a Health & Safety Officer / Environmental Health Officer from your district/borough council may be able to advise you if you are not sure about anything.

Be clear how many people you are permitted to have in your venue to comply with fire regulations, and make sure that your ticket sales do not exceed this number.